

MARENGO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Meeting Minutes  
September 28, 2023

4:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Rayvell Smith, President.

Establishment of a quorum.

Members present: Mr. Freddie Charleston, Mrs. Lynda Joiner, Mr. John McAlpine, Mr. Chester Moore, and Mr. Rayvell Smith.

Members absent: none.

The invocation was given by Mr. Smith.

Approval of Agenda

The motion to approve the agenda was made by Mrs. Joiner and seconded by Mr. Charleston. It carried unanimously.

Second Approval of Previous Meetings

The motion for second approval of the August 17, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes, the September 13, 2023, First Budget Hearing / Work Session, and the September 15, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes and Second Budget Hearing was made by Mr. McAlpine and seconded by Mr. Charleston. It carried unanimously.

I, Luke Hallmark, Superintendent of Education of Marengo County Schools, do hereby make the following recommendations:

Business Matters

- **Richard Johnson, Financial Update**  
Mr. Richard Johnson, CSFO, gave the Board members a financial update. In the General Fund, the cash balance as of July 31, 2023, was \$1,805,251.50. The receipts were \$1,062,661.28 while the expenditures were \$965,557.69. This left an August 31, 2023, cash balance of \$1,902,355.09. This is a good cash balance.
- **Terry Norton, Technology Update**  
Mr. Terry Norton, Technology Coordinator, gave the Board members a technology update. The quote for access control doors has been accepted and a signed purchase order will be emailed to the vendor on Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. A \$10,000 grant for Vex Robotics equipment at each school has been applied for. Another \$68,000 Cyber Security grant for the district has also been applied for. The district CTE teachers had a Professional Development Day to discuss student organizations, TAPE Review Preparation, and Science in the Career Tech curriculum. The CCR grant will be disbursed five different times throughout the school year. The purchases already made are Progress Learning Test Prep for grades 7 – 12, iCev CTE software teacher and student licenses, and official ACT Preparation study guides. Tentative upcoming purchases include a plant science greenhouse, virtual reality equipment and licenses, and ACAP and ACT Data Analytics and Strategies Professional Development. There is another grant that is being applied for that is due in October. The grant is for Middle Grades CTE Innovation and the amount is \$200,000.
- **Wendy Joiner, Instructional Update**  
Mrs. Wendy Joiner, Instructional Leader, gave her academic report to the Board members. The first message was the announcement that Sweet Water High School had been named in the top 25 public schools in Alabama for 2024. This is a very prestigious honor that took a lot of work from a lot of people. A map of the security fences was given to the Board members. The first work will be done at Marengo High School. The fences are all part of the school safety plan. Peer Helper Training was hosted at Marengo High School with 55 students and six coordinators. All schools were represented and they used their time to review the Code of Ethics and work on monthly campaigns. Ms. Kenyetta Evans will be teaching the Path lessons. Reading Intervention Training was held at A. L. Johnson High School with the Reading Coaches and Reading Intervention Teachers attending. The training discussed strategies for Tier 3 reading intervention based on data and student needs. A Dyslexia Awareness Training was presented at Sweet Water High School for all K – 3 teachers as well as teachers from Linden City, Demopolis City, and Greene County. A Math Nation Training was also held for all math teachers in grades 6 – 12. ACT Prep and Math tutoring with certified math teachers are also available through Math Nation. The Career Coach update included informing the Board members that all 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade assessments have been completed at each school. The FAFSA passwords have been set up and a new FAFSA application process was explained to the seniors. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade career projects are being completed at each school and the Naheola Credit Union has been scheduled to speak to all seniors about banking and investments. The screeners for Early Numeracy, Number Sense, and Fractional Reasoning have been approved in preparation for the Numeracy Act. The Literacy Act cut scores have been lowered for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Parents Night has been scheduled at all three schools with resources being provided with information about helping their children for the upcoming literacy test.
- **Black Warrior Telecommunications Consortium / Utilities Update**  
The Black Warrior Telecommunications Consortium financial statement balance for August 31, 2023, was \$77,073.96 in the checking account and \$90,908.14 in a CD. The utilities report for July, 2022, was \$35,656.53 while July, 2023, was \$40,140.24.

- Lakeisha Baker – Safety Concerns at Marengo High School  
Ms. Lakeisha Baker had been put on the agenda to speak to the Board members about security at Marengo High School. She has three children that are students at the school and is an active member of the PTO. She did not realize that the Board already had measures in place to make the school more secure. She appreciated the update.

#### Executive Sessions

Mr. Cody Sheffield and a friend asked to speak to the Board that required an executive session.

Mr. Charleston made the motion to go into executive session at 4:55 p.m. and seconded by Mr. Moore. It carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore made the motion to come out of executive session at 6:21 p.m. It was seconded by Mr. Charleston. It carried unanimously.

Mr. Mark Boardman and Mr. Julius Shanks, in accordance to the Open Meetings Act, asked to go into executive session using the following statement:

As an attorney to practice in Alabama, I, Mark Boardman, certify to the Marengo County Board of Education that Mr. Shanks and I can meet in executive session to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation, controversies not yet litigated but imminently likely to be litigated, or controversies imminently likely to be litigated if the Marengo County School Board pursues a proposed course of action. Any action the Marengo County Board of Education takes, however, must be deliberated in public. This complies with Alabama Code 36-25A-7(a)(3). I estimate the executive session will last 30 minutes.

Mr. Moore made the motion to go back into executive session at 6:22 p.m. and it was seconded by Mrs. Joiner. It carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore made the motion to come out of executive session again at 6:57 p.m. It was seconded by Mrs. Joiner. It carried unanimously.

#### New Business

1. That the Financial Reports for August, 2023, be approved.
2. That the General, Federal, Capital Projects, Accounts Payable, and Payroll account bank statements as reconciled by Chief Financial Officer and reviewed by the Superintendent for August, 2023, be approved.

3. That the Board approve withdrawing the CD at Alabama One due to the finding of the State Examiners and deposit into a FDIC approved local bank that offers the highest interest rate for 36 months.
4. That the Board approve decreasing transportation costs for field trips from \$1.85 to \$1.75 per mile effective August 1, 2023. This is mandated to all school systems per an August 17, 2023, memorandum from the Alabama State Department of Education.
5. That the Board approve Marengo High School senior trip to Orlando, Florida, on April 18, 2024, through April 19, 2024, with Dr. Alice Jackson, Principal, as a chaperone.
6. That the Board select a representative for the Marengo County Sick Leave Bank to serve from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024.

Kenyetta Evans will serve on the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

7. That the Board select a candidate for the Alabama Association of School Boards District 2 Director.

Mr. Moore made the motion for Ola Ford to be our candidate for the AASB District 2 Director. It was seconded by Mrs. Joiner and it passed unanimously.

8. That the Board select a member for the 2023 Delegate Assembly

Mr. Charleston was nominated to act as our Delegate during the AASB Delegate Assembly on November 30, 2023, and Mr. Moore as the alternate by Mrs. Joiner. It was seconded by Mr. McAlpine. It was approved unanimously.

9. That the Board approve using Boardman Carr for legal services.

#### Personnel Recommendations

10. That the Board approve the Superintendent's personnel recommendations as follows:

#### Employment of Support Personnel

Chinesha Chapman (effective September 18, 2023)	A. L. Johnson High School	Bus Driver
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Resignation of Support Personnel

Sarah Allen (effective September 25, 2023)	Sweet Water High School	Janitor
Luke Hinson (effective September 22, 2023)	Central Office	System Technician
Amanda Faye Smith (effective September 1, 2023)	Sweet Water High School	Bus Driver

Leave of Absence

Joey Black (effective September 14, 2023, for eight weeks)	Sweet Water High School	Bus Driver
Caroline Gibbs (effective August 25, 2023, returning 6 to 8 weeks after delivery)	Sweet Water High School	PreK Auxiliary Teacher (Aide)

Change of Contract

Ashley McCoy (move from lunch only to breakfast and lunch effective September 1, 2023)	Sweet Water High School	Child Nutrition
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Mrs. Joiner made the motion to approve items 1 through 10. A second came from Mr. Charleston. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent's Report

- Enrollment
- State Board of Education Retreat
- Revenue Abstract – August, 2023
- New Testing and Retention Standards
- SSA District 2 Meeting – September 26, 2023
- State Examiners Corrective Action Plan
- AHSAA Update – Football / Volleyball
- Absenteeism
- Risk Management
- Sick Leave Bank Committee
- Whole Board Training – October 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.
- FAFSA Changes
- Grocery Sales Tax
- Tik Tok Trends

- Leadership Marengo
- Cyber Security Measures
- School Bus Safety Week (October 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>)
- 2023 LEAD Nurses Training
- Possible Changes to School Libraries
- Education Savings Accounts
- Manual of State Laws and Regulations
- 2023-2024 Self-Assessment Requirements
- Why Teachers Leave
- Teacher Incentive Program Performance
- Government Shutdown

Date and Time of Next Regular Meeting of the Board

The date and time of the next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, October 26, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. was made by Mr. Moore and seconded by Mr. McAlpine. It carried unanimously.